



# Cover Texas Now!

Quality Affordable Health Coverage • Sustainable Health Care System

September 15, 2014

State Representatives and Senators  
Texas Legislature  
Austin, Texas

Dear Representatives and Senators,

As the Senate State Affairs Committee meets today to discuss the impact of the Affordable Care Act (ACA), we encourage you to inform your constituents about their available options to obtain health insurance, particularly when the open enrollment period for 2015 coverage in the Marketplace starts just two months from today.

Although Texas state government has not been a partner in promoting the new health insurance options, many Texas families have benefited from the Marketplace and other aspects of the ACA. During the first open enrollment period, which ended in April of this year, 734,000 Texans signed up for coverage through the federal health care marketplace. Eighty-four percent of those Texans received financial assistance to make their insurance policies more affordable.

More Texans will enjoy the health protections and financial stability of insurance if Texas leaders commit to public outreach regarding these new health coverage options. Key points to share with your constituents include the following:

- The next open enrollment period for the Marketplace will run from November 15, 2014 to February 15, 2015.
- Texans can obtain insurance through the Marketplace outside of the open enrollment period if they change jobs, have a baby, get married, or experience another event that qualifies for a Special Enrollment Period.
- Eligible children and pregnant women can sign up for insurance through the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) or Medicaid at any time.
- Most Texans who purchase coverage through the Marketplace will qualify for financial assistance to make their insurance more affordable.
- Texans can access the Marketplace by visiting [healthcare.gov](http://healthcare.gov) or calling 1-800-318-2596.

- In-person assistance with enrollment is available in all major metro areas, and in many smaller cities and rural communities as well. Additional information is available to constituents through [getcoveredamerica.org](http://getcoveredamerica.org).

- Texas workers who do not receive insurance from their employers and have an annual income below \$24,000 for a family of four still do not have any affordable insurance options. They are not eligible for premium subsidies through the Marketplace and the legislature has not developed a Texas plan to accept federal Medicaid funding for low-wage adults. These workers should contact their local clinics and county indigent programs to find out if they qualify for services.

We appreciate your consideration and any steps you can take to inform your constituents about their health insurance options.

Sincerely,

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